(1) The wild buffalo is included in Schedule I of the Wild life (Protection) Act, 1972, thus giving the species maximum possible protection under the law.

(2) The present habitats of the wild buffalo in India are included in the protected area network comprising national parks and sanctuaries, including tiger reserves. The protected areas containing wild buffaloes are being financially assisted under the Centrally sponsored schemes "Assistance for the development of sanctuaries and national parks", "Project Tiger", and "Conservation of rhinos in Assam", for their development.

(3) With a view mainly to avoid possible inter-breeding between the wild buffaloes and the domestic stock, livestock grazing in all the protected areas in Assam containing wild buffaloes has been banned. Domestic cattle living around the protected areas of Assam is inoculated against contagious diseases.

(4) The Government of India has sponsored survey and research to establish the status of the wild buffalo and to identify genetically pure populations of the species to enable measures to be taken for their conservation.

[*Translation*]

Educationally Backward District of Gujarat

3439. SHRI RATILAL VARMA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the educationally backward districts of Gujarat; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to eliminate their educational backwardness?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Educationally backward districts having less than national average rate of literacy in the State of Gujarat as per 1981 Census, are Kachchh, Banas Kantha, Panch Mahals and The Dangs.

(b) There are a number of programmes under implementation in the areas of Elementary Education and Adult Education. Further under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as Operation Blackward, Teacher Education, Non-Formal Education and Adult Education Programmes, financial assistance is provided to the State Governments for educational development . The State Government / U.T. Administrations have been advised to concentrate on backward districts.

Status of Central University to Kunwar Singh University

3440. SHRI RAM LAKHAN SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposed to grant Central University status to Kunwar Singh University in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c). As a matter of policy, Central Government have considered it